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U.S. Steps Up Funding for Agricultural Research

The United States has stepped up funding for research to develop new climate-resilient cereals, high-producing legumes and disease-resistant crops and livestock, according to a top official with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

"Research is at the heart of Feed the Future," said Julie Howard, USAID's Bureau for Food Security chief scientist and the Agency's senior adviser to the administrator on agricultural research, extension and education. Howard noted that USAID is spending \$120 million for crop and animal research and training in 2012, triple the amount it spent in 2008.

She said Feed the Future—the Obama administration's strategy for improving agriculture, food sustainability and nutrition—focuses on four geographic areas that have high rates of poverty and malnutrition as well as potential to transform their agricultural systems. Those are the South Asia region of Bangladesh and India; the African Sahel region, mainly northern Ghana and southern Mali; the Ethiopian highlands; and the maize-growing region of eastern and southern Africa.

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